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Letter to the Editor

Update on Long-Term Symptomless HIV Type 1 Infection in Recipients of Blood Products from a Single Donor

EDITOR: In 1992, we reported on HIV-1 infection in six recipients of blood products from a single donor. We now report the tracing of another recipient from the single common donor. This recipient (C-124), a 77-year-old female, transfused for cardiac surgery with a unit of red cells donated in April 1981 by the common donor, has been traced and tested anti-HIV positive. She is symptomless, with a conserved $CD4^+$ count over 13 years since transfusion, and this is the longest infected of the recipients.

The original group[1] of five symptomless recipients has been infected an average of 11 years, and it has now been established that the donor has been infected since April 1981. They all remain clinically symptomless with conserved $CD4^+$ counts and none has received antiviral therapy.

Certain HLA antigens have been shown to influence both susceptibility[2] and disease progression[3,4] in individuals exposed to HIV. Tissue typing of the Sydney BTS cohort clearly demonstrates that sharing of HLA antigens is not a common factor in this group (Table 1). Shared HLA types also do not appear to explain long-term survival in one study of long-term infected, sexually acquired HIV.[5]

The identification of yet another symptomless recipient from a single common donor, 13 years since infection, the continued symptomless status of the donor and the recipients, and the varied HLA tissue types of the group, would suggest that sharing of HLA alleles or haplotypes does not explain long-term nonprogression in this cohort.

TABLE 1. HLA TYPING OF SYMPTOMLESS GROUP

Code		*HLA type*		
Current	*Previous*[a]	*A*	*B*	*DR*
D-36	Donor	1, 23	8, 18	NT
C-124	—	NT	NT	7, 11
C-98	C	2, 28	7, 60	NT
C-83	F	1, 24	27, 62	2, 4[b]
C-64	B	3, 32	7, 44	1, 15
C-18	A	2, 11	44, 60	4, –
C-49	E	2, 11	7, 60	15, 13[c]
C-54	D	25, 32	18, 35	8, 15

[a]Reference 1.
[b]Deceased.
[c]Typed by Taq 1 RFLP.

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